

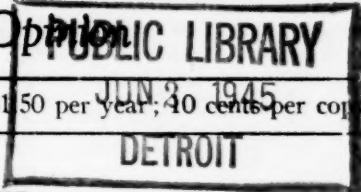
Christianity and Crisis

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Soberness in Victory

IT was most fortunate that America received the news of the victory in Europe more quietly than a quarter century ago. The hysteria of the former occasion was absent for various reasons. We had had several weeks to anticipate the victory, while the Nazi power gradually collapsed. There was a difference of a day between the actual and the official knowledge of the surrender; and furthermore the war was not over.

These were the immediate causes of our comparative soberness. But there were even profounder reasons for sobriety in victory. Perhaps they also affected the public mood; and perhaps they prompted the rather large attendance at religious services on V-E day. These reasons are all comprehended in the magnitude of the drama in which we are involved. Everything which is happening is really too big and too complex for our comprehension. The war which has ended in victory was the costliest and most global conflict of human history. It has left even the wealthiest victor nations shaken in the very structure of their economic life; and it has reduced Europe to a physical and economic as well as political chaos. The price of victory has been very high.

The defeated enemy has been more completely destroyed than any nation in history, at least since the day when the Romans destroyed Carthage. That was partly because the nation was ruled by a tyranny which was able to hold a beaten nation in battle until almost the last ounce of life blood was drawn from it. The same tyranny has also been able to destroy every crystallization of new political life during its long and terrible reign; so that Germany is a political vacuum as well as an economic desert. It is still a question whether our obliteration bombing, which has reduced the whole of western and central Germany to a rubble heap, was necessary for victory, though no less an authority than Von Runstedt has affirmed that precision bombing was indispensable to our victory. If it was necessary for victory we have another proof of the total character of total war.

The cost of this war has been so great for both victors and vanquished that many will undoubtedly arise to remind us of their predictions of its price

and of their apprehensions about its consequences. We will have to remind them that some of their apprehensions were wrong. They had declared that we could not engage in this struggle without losing our democratic institutions. These have in fact survived the extraordinary exertions of the conflict very well. But it will be more important to call their attention to the fact that the war was an alternative to slavery. As the victorious armies liberated one concentration camp after another and unearthed the hideous cruelties which were practiced in them, they gave us some hint of what the dimensions of total slavery are like, from which we escaped by a total war.

However we measure the conflict, whether in terms of the evil we opposed, or the evils we had to commit in opposing it, or the destruction of the vanquished or the price of the victors, the dimensions of the drama in which we are involved are staggering. It is well that we should be shocked into sobriety by the magnitude of historical events and should be prompted to humility and piety by a contemplation of the tasks which still confront us. All of them are really beyond our best wisdom.

The administration of a completely prostrate vanquished nation has suddenly become our responsibility. It is well that thoughts of vengeance will be qualified by the immediate tasks of preventing starvation among the vast population of destroyed cities. Whether this wealthy nation will have the grace to reduce its dietary standards for the sake of feeding a starving Europe will be one of the great moral and political issues of the coming months. We talked very simply and grandly, and sometimes very vindictively, of "eradicating" all the Nazis. We shall soon discover that even if we are more discriminating, than we are inclined to be, that there are more Nazis who deserve death than we can kill; or at least than we can kill without becoming infected with Nazism. Even the imprisonment of the most confirmed Nazi criminals is a staggering, and in some respects an impossible task. Of course the prevention of future crime will depend primarily upon more positive measures, primarily upon our ability to elicit response from the healthy and sane elements

in Germany. All these tasks are too great for human wisdom. They will not be done too well in any event because of their magnitude; but they will be done with a greater degree of wisdom if they are done with a measure of humility. If we had more awe before the tragic punishments which God has already visited upon a nation which took law into its own hands we would at least be saved the folly of spoiling the divine punishment by our own efforts to add and subtract. We might well remember that the greatest difficulty which a vanquished nation finds in turning from the "sorrow of this world" (despair) to the "sorrow of God" (repentance) is that the pride

of the victor tends to obscure the divine punishment. Let us therefore not seek to reduce the dimension of the history in which we are involved, so that it might be made more compatible with the limits of our powers. Let us recognize that we have faced the mystery of evil and of good, of tragedy and of victory, of divine judgment and mercy in more tremendous proportions than ever before in history. The humble consciousness of the inadequacy of our wisdom for the tasks which confront us may infuse our wisdom with grace and thus render it more adequate for the issues we must face.

R. N.

Help for European Churches

A. L. WARNSHUIS

WHAT can the American churches do to help the people in Europe? Politics and economics are not outside the concern of the churches, but that concern is shared with others. What is the special task of the churches, which will not be done if not done by them?

Two principles must have continued emphasis. (1) The European churches must determine the program. Americans will not ask Europeans to do for us what we want to do, but Americans will respond to what Europeans ask us to do to help them. The most effective special work that the American churches can do is to aid in rebuilding and strengthening the churches in Europe for the continued and larger service to be rendered by them in their own communities and nations. (2) Priorities and practicability must be controlling ideas. We can fritter away our strength in fussing about projects that are not unworthy, that have an emotional appeal, but which are not vital or multiplying in their effect upon the essential need that we must strive to relieve. In a situation that is so complex, when demands upon us will exceed our resources, we must study to discover what is of fundamental importance, what is really practicable, and what should have first and second place in our program of action.

Food, clothing and medicine will be urgently needed, especially during the next few months. The churches in Europe will certainly be engaged in trying to meet such need, and it is through them that the Christian spirit will be manifested. We must try to give those churches whatever they ask for in such service. The responsibility for mass feeding and rebuilding is necessarily one that the national governments must accept and they insist upon controlling the measures of relief. The transportation of mate-

rials is necessarily controlled by the army and navy. The elemental problems are those of reviving industry and agriculture and of repairing means of transportation. Impracticable projects will result in reactions that are discouraging. We must be alert to respond quickly to the appeals of the European churches, and we should seek for opportunities to aid in making the governmental efforts more effective, and possibly how we may supplement them. The recent united clothing drive is an example of such cooperation.

Many times greater than the physical suffering has been, is the mental and spiritual agony of the European people. That is one of the deepest impressions made upon me in my recent visit to that war-torn continent. These people have been living in a completely arbitrary world,—no law, no justice, no security. Almost all of life was illegal according to the established laws and customs. The enemy also disregarded all laws and safeguards by resorting to rule by the Gestapo. There could be no neutrality nor any compromise, for they confronted a totalitarian system. The choice was either to submit and to participate in that regime or to fight against it. Basic ideas of life and religious beliefs were also under attack. In resistance, lying, stealing, falsifying documents, disguising one's identity, promoting sabotage, stabbing and shooting to kill,—all this and more was common life. Fear of the Gestapo haunted them by day and by night. They feared lest they might not be able to endure the trial of being beaten and tortured. They were afraid of death and even more afraid of deceiving their fellows and of denying their faith. As they tried to harmonize their standards of morality with their duty as members of the liberation movement, the strain upon conscience has

been terrific. What the world accepts and justifies in the organized warfare by uniformed troops is not easily approved when done by civilians. To turn heroically rebellious people into a tranquil and orderly nation, to change armed bands of underground fighters into responsible citizens will require time and patience. The people who had learned to consider resistance to authority, disobedience and obstruction as their great duties must now be made to understand that cooperation and discipline and order are the civic duties required. Law and justice and security must be reestablished, and to that end honesty and truthfulness and regard for neighbors must control their actions. Ethics and morality must be re-learned,—especially by the youth who have been living in an unmoral, illegal world, and have scarcely known any other. It is in this sphere that the churches have a great responsibility and opportunity.

It is hard to foresee clearly what the conditions in Germany will be. Military occupation by the forces of the United Nations, imposed by conquest, seems certain. National, provincial and even municipal governments will be liquidated. Social chaos can hardly be escaped, in spite of the struggle of the alien military government to re-establish local government and to revive the service of public utilities. What will be the condition and attitudes of the German people? Defeat, disillusionment, dishonor, confusion, suffering, hopelessness, lethargy,—and among others, hatred, secret defiance, underground plotting of revenge. Will or can the churches be centers of stabilizing influence? Will the churches now have a Christian message, not only for the individual, but also for the community and the state and the nation?

In the Resistance Movements, both in the occupied countries and in Germany too, the churches have been the backbone. As a consequence, there is an awakened interest on the part of many people in discovering the secret of the courage and power of the churches. The evangelistic opportunity today is very great. The former static conditions, in which people traditionally belonged to one or the other church, or to none, are broken. At the same time the official ministry of the churches is most seriously depleted. Will a lay leadership quickly arise? Will the churches overcome their latitudinarianism, forsake their theological controversies, and infuse their other-worldliness with a realistic awareness of the needs of men and women in their present-day world? Awakening to the evangelistic opportunity immediately before them, will the churches be able to interpret the gospel message in language and in content that the people can understand and recognize as relevant to their individual and communal distress?

Some of the ways in which the American churches can be helpful are becoming apparent. Much money for various good purposes will be needed. Besides support for the ordinary work of the churches, would

it not be a good undertaking to provide for the establishment of weekly or daily newspapers in France, in Holland, in Germany, and perhaps elsewhere, which would preach the Gospel in terms of every-day life and of national and international developments? There is a famine of Bibles, and other Christian literature must be published and used. These and other parts of a united program of service are being developed under the auspices of the World Council of Churches. Beyond all that, can American Christians and churches, who have scarcely any knowledge and no experience of the terrible suffering of the people in Europe, really be of any service? A truly humble mind must characterize our attitude towards Europe.

Reconciliation must be sought. We have been enemies. No easy forgetting of what has been done will have any value. Without penitence can there be any forgiving? There must be much frank, candid, truth-seeking conversation, in which we must listen humbly as well as speak boldly. Are American churches and Christians ready to undertake their part in this great, necessary work of reconciliation?

The Church in Russia

J. H. OLDHAM*

THERE is a question whether the Russian Church may not have purchased its new liberties at the price of complete subservience to the State. The new privileges accorded to the church are striking and far-reaching. Outstanding among them is the re-establishment of the Patriarchate. The number of dioceses, which in the census of 1941 was returned as 30, is now 100. Most important of all for the future is the opening of the first Orthodox theological colleges.

But, granting this external restoration, does the church possess real freedom? Canon Widdrington holds that, unless we are to charge bishops, priests and lay Christians with grave insincerity we must

* We are publishing this article on the religious situation in Russia by Dr. J. H. Oldham, as it appeared in *The Christian News-Letter* in Britain, in the issue of April 18th.

We believe that this is the most careful estimate of the Russian religious situation which has come to our attention. At certain points we might be inclined to be more critical of the Russian Orthodox Church than Dr. Oldham is. We are not at all certain, for instance, "that the death of the Patriarch Sergius is as great a loss to the Church in Russia as that of Archbishop Temple is to the Churches of Great Britain." We are not certain about this, because we have some question whether the Patriarch Sergius maintained the integrity of the church in necessary adjustment of the life of the Church of the Soviet State.

accept their testimony that they do enjoy freedom to worship and to manage their own affairs, and that the church, stripped of its revenues and worldly prestige, and relieved of those secular tasks which it had to perform under the old regime, is in a more favorable position than it was before.

He insists that the principal factor in the change was the far-sighted and courageous leadership of the late Metropolitan Sergius, who perceived the deeper meanings of the Russian Revolution and helped to bring about a fundamental change in the mind of churchmen. His insights came gradually to be shared by his fellow-bishops, and during the war have doubtless spread to an increasing number of priests and laity. Leading men in the Russian Church in exile have also from the beginning refused to condemn the Revolution. The late Serge Bulgakoff, Dean of the Russian Academy in Paris, for example, declared: "Communism has arisen on the basis of a search for the truth of life, for the Kingdom of God on earth, with an apocalyptic tenseness of faith in the future, and a sincere desire to realize it, and we may hope that this will for the future is not displeasing to God, and will not be turned to shame." And Berdyaev in a recent lecture in Paris insisted on the affinities between the Christian attitude to life and that of Communism, which began by repudiating Christianity, but could not in face detach itself from the profoundly religious and humanist ideal of the Russian people.

The second question is whether the leaders of the church are sufficiently alive to the need for drastic reform in the outlook of the church, and sufficiently capable of presenting the Christian faith against the background of the stupendous changes in the nation's life. It is here that the death of the Patriarch Sergius is as great a loss to the Church in Russia as that of Archbishop Temple is to the Churches of Great Britain. But there is reason to believe that the Patriarch was able, before he was taken away, to impart something of his vision to others. One of the chief hopes for the future is the radical reform that has taken place in the whole system of training priests. No one will henceforth be accepted for ordination who has not been in the State schools until the age of eighteen. The aim will be to equip the clergy to present Christianity to the contemporary world. The old practice of ordaining men with the scantiest qualifications has been completely abandoned.

The third question is whether the Soviet Government can be trusted to continue its present policy of toleration and friendliness. Canon Widdrington believes that, if Russia is to maintain its influence in the Balkans, the Soviet Government cannot afford bad relations with the Patriarchate, and that it will be reluctant also to embark on a policy that would estrange sympathy in America and Great Britain.

Commander King-Hall has recently returned from a visit to Russia as a member of the British Parliamentary Mission. One of the strongest impressions left on his mind is the marked change in the attitude of the Government to the churches. In the articles which he has contributed to the *National News-Letter* he describes how, when he wanted to visit the Godless museum in Leningrad, he found that it was closed, and says that this is only one of many indications of a sharp movement "towards religion" by the Party line. He found that both on religious and on political grounds the Orthodox Church is hostile to the Vatican and anxious to safeguard its interests in the Balkans against Roman Catholic penetration. It seems to him highly probable that Marshal Stalin inclines toward building up a strongly national Russian Church, which will provide a powerful counterweight to Rome.

In January of this year the National Assembly of the Russian Orthodox Church met to elect a new Patriarch and to deal with other church matters. The meeting was attended by Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops from the Middle East and the Balkans, who came at the expense of the Russian Church out of funds provided by the Government. Official greetings and good wishes from the Soviet Government were conveyed to the Assembly by the Chairman of the Council for Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (a department of Government), who recalled in his speech how "in the days of grave trial which our Motherland experienced many times in the past, the Orthodox Russian Church never severed its connection with the people, lived by its needs, aspirations and hopes, and contributed its share to the nation's cause." The Assembly addressed a message of warm greeting and gratitude to the Soviet Government, declaring that the church, "thanks be to God, lives a full life in accordance with our canons and church usage," and received in all its activities full assistance from the Government, and expressing deep appreciation of "the confident and highly favorable and attentive attitude towards all church enterprises on the part of the State authority."

It would be naïve to suppose that in the attitude of the Soviet Government to the church there is not a blend of cynicism. It may be doubted whether the policy of the authorities meets with the approval of all members of the Party. But it may well seem to the rulers of Russia, not only that the church may have a value for propaganda in the West and as an instrument of Russian influence in neighboring countries, but that religion may provide a needed solace for a harassed people and serve as a focus of national historical sentiment.

The question is how far the church will be able, within this context of varied motives, to declare unmistakably and convincingly that Christian view of

the ultimate issues of life. It is, of course, not in Russia alone that the church is exposed to the danger of a too close identification with the national outlook and secular aims. There are those in this country also for whom Church-of-Englandism, rather than Christianity is their real religion.† It would be wrong, however, to underestimate the importance of the fact that the Church in Russia is able to maintain its separate existence as guardian of the Christian tradition. So long as it preserves the Christian scriptures and the heritage of Christian doctrine, there sleep within it forces which are never wholly inoperative and may at any time spring into fresh life.

The Modern Cruc

In the relations between Christianity and Communism there is one fundamental issue which the church cannot evade. It is increasingly evident that it is necessary to distinguish in Communism two quite different strains. The Russian experiment exerts a powerful attraction by the intensity of the desire, however secularized, to realize the Kingdom of God on earth, and by its power to evoke from the people as a whole an astonishing energy and self-sacrificing devotion in the service of the common good. But there also prevails among Communists the doctrine that the end justifies every means and that loyalty to the Party admits of no scruples and excuses every crime. This doctrine and practice are by no means confined to Communism, but have acquired among Communists an alarming ascendancy. Miss Alice Cameron protested in a Supplement in the *Christian News-Letter* against some of the manifestations in this country. The excesses of the Communist element in Greece provoked the strongest resentment and condemnation among our troops.

A few weeks ago we raised as sharply as we could the question whether it is permissible in the service of what we believe to be a righteous cause to go all lengths in ruthlessness.‡ The same problem is the subject of a challenging article by Alexander Miller in *The Presbyterian*, which we welcome in its new, attractive quarterly form. The article deals with questions raised in the two remarkable novels by Arthur Koestler, *Darkness at Noon* and *Arrival and Departure*. Does revolutionary necessity override every human necessity? Are not only our own lives, but the lives of those we most dearly love, to be sacrificed without a qualm, when occasion calls, to Party loyalty? Are we in working for distant ends to treat the human person as of no account and to regard the individual as nothing more than "a unit in a mathe-

matical equation, to be manipulated unemotionally in the work of revolutionary engineering?"

It is essential, as Lex Miller sees it, to grasp the fact that these are the questions, not necessarily of bad men, but of men who have a real personal integrity and are prepared to sacrifice themselves freely in a cause in which they believe.

In one of the novels there is a parable of the Last Judgment, in which, among those on trial, an old man is accused by the prosecutor of complicity in every crime of present, past and future. "He never killed a fly," it is urged in his defense. "The flies he did not kill brought pestilence to a whole province," was the reply. His crime was a compassion that restrained the ruthlessness demanded by the good of the whole.

"If one goes all the way with the logical Communist," Lex Miller concludes, "then a whole abyss of horror opens up." Any kind of ruthlessness is justified if the end is good enough, and the very human purpose of the revolution is swallowed up in a kind of impersonal engineering program, to which multitudes of ordinary human beings must be sacrificed if need be. If, on the other hand, one turns away in horror from this logic, and begins to indulge in compassion and consideration for individuals and the rest—where is the end? A province may be devastated because a man will not kill a fly. The good of the greater number may be menaced by unwholesome tenderness for ones and twos. Is one not thereby disqualified from taking any effective public action at all?

"Koestler is not stating an abstract dilemma. He is describing the problem of existence as it presents itself to the most sensitive spirits of our time. Those who do not feel that problem have nothing to say and nothing to contribute. Is life to be governed by empirical and experimental standards, or do morality and compassion lay us under absolute obligation and absolute restraint, so that some kinds of action become impossible for us however promising they may look from the efficiency point of view?"

This difficult and crucial problem of our time de-

‡ In regard to the particular instance that was discussed—the indiscriminate bombing of cities—the question has been raised by a distinguished soldier, Major-General J. F. C. Fuller, in his recently published book *Watchwords*, whether any military advantages of the policy of "strategic" bombing are not bought at too great a cost. What, he asks, will be the future of a continent in which there has been created an almost complete "industrial vacuum"? The task of rebuilding is so colossal that in his view no money system can cope with it. Slave labour in one form or another will become inevitable. "Thus on account of the bomb and the discovery of flight, the whole social, economic, financial and political life of western man will be changed. . . . The very things we are fighting for are being silted up by the rubble and dust of the very means of war which we imagine can liberate the nations and secure for all time our own freedom."

† As a soldier naïvely confessed in a letter to *The Times*: "To be honest I should admit that I am much more of an Anglican Churchman than I am an orthodox Christian." (Quoted in the brilliant chapter on "English Religion" in D. W. Brogan's *The English People*.)

mands the best theological thought that can be given to it. But the solution will not be found by thought alone, but by concrete obedience in the practical situations with which life confronts us. The answer will come, in Lex Miller's view, not so much by the formulation of general principles as by acting in politics in response to God's direct command. By this is meant that those who sincerely and humbly seek to

know how God would have them act will have light given to them. If we thus seek, "we shall in fact find that the work to which God sets us in His world does not call for the sort of activity which conflicts with His will for us. In other words, we shall have good ground to suspect the political utility of such policies and programs as offered our Christian 'instinct' when that is tutored by the Gospel."

The World Church: News and Notes

Niemoeller Sees Hope for Germany In Church; Expects to Visit U. S.

Germany's only hope for the future is in the church, Pastor Martin Niemoeller declared in the first public statement he has made since he became a prisoner of the Nazis eight years ago.

Looking thin, but apparently in good health despite his long imprisonment, Pastor Niemoeller announced that he hopes to visit England and the United States before returning to his Dahlem parish in Berlin.

In an interview, the Berlin pastor said he believed the only way Germany can get through the next few months and begin her future is through the influence of Christianity, particularly German Protestantism, aided by American Protestants. Developing this thought, he said:

"I believe that this future will be a great one in that our people now know that all false idealisms are worthless. There is no possibility for finding a new ideal base other than in the church. Nazism has been tried. Bolshevism is too much like Nazism to have a much better chance. There is no place for it, either, among our disillusioned people. All the old idealisms have failed us.

"There is only one way in the future. At least there will be a trial in this direction and it is a tremendous challenge both to Catholicism and Protestantism not to let our people down at this moment."

Pastor Niemoeller spent the first four years of his imprisonment in solitary confinement at the Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps. During this period he read 300 volumes of English literature after he finally received permission to have books.

He said: "I have been treated correctly. None of the guards ever touched me."

The scene of Pastor Niemoeller's liberation was a large modern hotel on the shores of a mountain lake that mirrors the grandiose spectacle of snow-covered, pine-sloped dolomites that tower above the famous Cortina d'Ampezzo resort. Almost his first act as a free man was to lead an evening church service. Facing a deeply-stirred congregation, which sang with him the opening hymn, he read a Scriptural Lesson from John 16:23-33, and preached a sermon on the text from Isaiah 54:10: "The mountains may tremble and the hills fall, but My mercy will not abandon you." R. N. S.

Waldensians Celebrate End of Fascist Rule

Italy's Waldensian Protestants joined in exuberant celebration to mark the end of 25 years of Fascist rule in northern Italy.

Church bells and sirens heralded the triumphant return of young Waldensian Partisans from the mountains to take part in victory festivities in the public square.

Bright sunlight dazzled on the white starched and intricately fluted coifs of Waldensian women, and their hand-embroidered kerchiefs and bright colored dresses lent brilliance to the rejoicing. Many were mothers who displayed photographs of their fallen sons.

An unexpected greeting was given me, the first accredited American correspondent to enter the village, when blond, rosy-cheeked children came forward to bestow a kiss and present bouquets of white lilacs, snowdrops, and blood-red mountain rhododendron gathered from the high rocks bordering the valley.

One of the most notable chapters in the resistance movement in northern Italy was the stubborn stand taken by Protestant Waldensians until the very day of the German surrender.

Enraged by the guerrilla tactics of the Waldensians, a German colonel, addressing his men in the public square of Torre Pellice in February, 1944, urged them to "go out and kill, kill, kill." That day the Nazis killed 16 people in a single village, and a few days later two Waldensian ministers and eight professors of the Waldensian College were imprisoned in Pinerolo as hostages because Partisans had attacked Bobbio Pellice barracks and taken 45 militiamen as prisoners.

To spare the lives of the ten Waldensians who were the heart of the community's resistance, the Partisans returned the 45 militiamen, but the struggle of the few against the many continued and a single narrow road leading to the valley was never safe for German transport. R. N. S.

List Church Reconstruction Needs of European Countries

London: The Committee for Christian Reconstruction in Europe has issued a statement here listing types of aid being sought by churches in various countries through the Reconstruction Department of the World Council of

Churches. The statement itemizes church needs as follows:

Norway: Temporary church buildings and parish halls; Bibles, hymn books, and Communion vessels; invitations to students of theology to foreign universities.

Finland: Residential training center for parish lay workers in the Lutheran Church; people's high school for youth of the Eastern Orthodox Church; theological scholarships for Lutheran and Orthodox; help for evacuated and orphaned children.

Holland: Supplementing pastors' salaries; automobiles for church leaders and bicycles for parochial clergy; temporary buildings to replace destroyed churches; aid for journal for evacuees, deportees and prisoners of war; scholarships for emergency theological faculty; Bibles and service books.

Belgium: Help for pastors and for reestablishing evangelistic missions.

France: Temporary church buildings; supplementing pastors' salaries; scholarships; theological books published in other countries during the war.

Greece: Cloth for clerical robes; help in rebuilding 1,000 destroyed churches; theological training in British universities.

R. N. S.

Canterbury Confers Lambeth Cross on Greek Layman

Professor Hamilcar Alivisatos, representative of Metropolitan Damaskinos, Regent of Greece, has been awarded the Lambeth Cross for furthering understanding and closer relationships between Anglicans and communicants of the Greek Orthodox Church. The presentation was made by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey Francis Fisher.

An outstanding lay leader of the ecumenical movement, Professor Alivisatos is the third holder of the Lambeth Cross and the first layman to receive it. Previous recipients were Archbishop Germanos of Greece and Bishop Brilioth of Sweden.

R. N. S.

World Council Secretary Asks German Church Be Aided

Aid for the German church in establishing a new basis of society after the overthrow of Hitler was urged by Dr. W. A. Visser 't Hooft, general Secretary of the World Council of Churches, in an address before the British Council of Churches.

"With the breakdown of the whole totalitarian system," Dr. Visser 't Hooft said, "the church in Germany will find itself the only body with cohesion and a clear message, and it must be helped within the ecumenical movement to do its job."

He said that in the liberated countries of Europe also the church has an opportunity to aid in social reorganization.

"In many parts of Europe, the resistance movement is magnificent and its members have shown great courage, but it has too little cohesion or permanent values to create by itself a new basis of society," Dr. Visser 't Hooft stated.

"On the other hand, the church, which has stood firm under the test of terrific crises, and is more alive than

ever, is ready to seize the opportunity to speak to the masses who have lost all sense of bearing because of the disappearance of the framework in which they have lived before."

R. N. S.

Pope Warns Catholics Against Social Theories Displeasing to Church

Catholics were warned by Pope Pius XII against endorsing social theories or systems displeasing to the church. The Pontiff spoke before 1,200 delegates attending the National Catholic Action Congress in the Hall of the Benedictions, where his appearance was greeted by cries of "Long live the Pope of Peace."

"Although those doctrines are definitely laid down in their basic points," the Holy Father said, "the church must interpret them according to the changing necessities of the time in order that her principles remain unbroken. No one can evade them."

"No Catholic, at least anyone of your organization, is permitted to endorse social theories or systems that the church has prohibited or of which she has warned. You understand why the Holy See has to intervene when, among those who claim to be Catholics, harmful social tendencies arise. Be cautious and vigilant."

R. N. S.

Church Authorities Helped Save Turin from Destruction

Roman Catholic Church authorities played an important part in saving Turin from destruction and death in the days preceding the German surrender.

The city had already been liberated by Italian Partisans, when Maurilio Cardinal Fossati, Archbishop of Turin, learned that strong German columns were heading toward the former Sardinian Capital to escape along a westward route. He immediately set out in his Vatican licensed-plated automobile to interview the German commander.

The German general agreed to lead his forces around the city if the Partisans would not attack them. Precise guarantees were impossible, however, because of the dispersal of Partisan bands and because the Germans did not know the exact route they would have to take. At all events, the Germans by-passed the city.

Scattered Partisan formations, although unaware of the Cardinal's mediation, did not attack the retreating Germans. This explains why the Germans massacred many civilians along the line of withdrawal. Sixty-six persons in the village of Grugliasco alone were killed.

R. N. S.

Cripps Warns Against Indiscriminate Punishment of Germany

A warning against indiscriminate punishment of Germany was issued by Sir Stafford Cripps, British Minister of Aircraft Production, before a Christian Student Movement meeting here.

"No one would expect a Christian to condone the state of affairs disclosed in Nazi concentration camps or deny the need for punishing those responsible," Sir

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Stafford said, "but that is because of the wrongs done and not because the doers of them were Germans.

"There is all the difference in the world between unreasoning hatred or revenge and a calm and considered carrying out of a just sentence upon the wrongdoer. Revenge may be, and often is, directed against whole nations or groups of people, many of whom may be innocent."

Discussing post-war reconstruction, the Minister said: "Christians must not make the mistake of insisting that nothing but Utopia is good. They will have to compromise continually with the forces of materialism until they are finally overcome and brought under control."

R. N. S.

New Director of "World Council Service"

Rev. Robbins Wolcott Barstow, D.D., LL.D., of Hartford, Connecticut, for the past fourteen years president of the Hartford Seminary Foundation, has become the Director of the new Commission for World Council Service, set up by the American Committee for the World Council of Churches.

This Commission, newly organized under the chairmanship of Dr. Theodore A. Greene of New Britain, Conn., has taken over the responsibilities of the Central Bureau for Inter-Church Aid in America. It will carry forward the program of the Department of Reconstruction and Inter-Church Aid of the World Council in Geneva. It will have important administrative and promotional responsibilities throughout the post-war years and will have much to do with giving practical expression to Christian unity and ecumenical cooperation in the life of the churches of all lands. Included in its program is work with the chaplaincy commission of the prisoner of war camps, coordination of refugee relief activities, and reconstruction and inter-church aid. I. C. P. I. S.

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Communication

Dear Sir:

May I endorse with all possible emphasis the fact mentioned in passing in the article signed H. S. L. in *CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS* for January 22nd under the title "Is America the Old World?" that there has been a great growth of co-operation between Catholics and Protestants in Europe generally in recent years. In England, partly no doubt because the Church of England forms a kind of bridge between what your writer calls "these two major wings of Christendom," the cleavage was much less sharp than in many other countries. The conditions of war and persecution have brought Christian people together, however, all over the Continent, and our sympathy and admiration for them and the need to get on with common tasks here have similarly brought us together in Scotland. One small example of this is a little Christian Social Action Group here in Edinburgh. I enclose three samples of its activities:

- (1) A resolution and covering letter on the rescue of victims from Nazi Terror sent to Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament and published in *The Scotsman* newspaper, April 6, 1943.
- (2) A leaflet on the Beveridge Report published July 1943.
- (3) The notice of a Public Meeting held in February 1944 on the Christian Approach to European Settlement at which the Chair was taken by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and one of the speakers was a Roman Catholic Friar.

On this subject of Christian unity I should like to stress the excellent work done by the religious Broadcasting Committee of the B.B.C., on which the Roman Catholic, the Anglican, and the Protestant Churches are all represented. This has not only given opportunity for Broadcast services taken and sermons delivered by representatives of the various branches of the church, but has in a remarkable manner presented courses of addresses, and also Miss Dorothy Sayers' Plays "The Man Born to Be King," which, while not being in the least colourless or suggestive of the avoidance of positive doctrine, have been substantially acceptable to all professing positive Christianity. Such were Father D'Arcy's talks on Conduct, and more recently Mr. C. S. Lewis' talks published in three small volumes under the titles "Broadcast Talks," "Christian Behaviour" and "Beyond Personality." Both Dr. Walsh in his introduction to "The Man Born to Be King," and Mr. Lewis, mention that among those who read and made friendly comment on the manuscripts were Catholics as well as Protestants.

Yours sincerely,

ANNE ASHLEY, *General Secretary,*
Edinburgh Council of Social Service.

Author in This Issue

A. L. Warnshuis is Foreign Councilor to the Church Committee on Overseas Relief and Reconstruction. He was formerly Secretary of the International Missionary Council. He has recently returned from a survey of conditions in Europe.